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Manteca, CA 95337
February 17, 1998

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Lester Snow and BDAC Members
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 9th St., Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Lester and BDAC Members:

I urge that we start our meeting on March 19 with a discussion of the process by which the Council's advice will be sought and expressed regarding the selection of a preferred alternative and the composition of the common pool. We should also discuss the information that we will need in order to make intelligent decisions.

There are disturbing appearances that the staff has prejudged the outcome prior to furnishing numerous areas of information that have been requested by members of BDAC and prior to seeking any clear concurrence from BDAC. The staff appears to be selling an alternative not choosing one. Perhaps we are presumed to concur if we don't raise a clear objection before it is too late to influence a decision. The staff has been quoted as saying that it will now focus only on alternative 3. It has declined our request that alternatives 2 and 3 each be optimized and clearly defined, including operational plans and the relative importance and feasibility of assurances before a selection is made.

Alternative 2 has not been optimized for either fishery protection or export water quality. We still await requested information on the isolated canal in respect to incremental cost, farm and environmental land displacement, control of seepage, passage of flood waters, etc. We still see statements that the isolated canal preserves the "common pool", (e.g., in the February 5 California Water Clearinghouse). I don't understand how this can be viewed as an honest statement. My February 1 letter to you discussed these and other appearances of bias and inadequacy in presentations being made to the BDAC. Furthermore, substantial elements of the common program are only now being reconsidered after members of BDAC and knowledgeable Delta representatives have again called attention to misunderstandings regarding terrain; more effective, less disruptive, and less costly methods of achieving objectives; etc.

In summary, if BDAC is to play a meaningful advisory role, it must first be provided with information that has not been forthcoming. It must then deliberate in depth regarding the pros and cons of choices. If we merely fail to object to canned statements that are presented to us, we will be pawns with little influence on the outcome. I, therefore, urge a forthright discussion of the role of BDAC and how that role will be performed.

Sincerely,



Alex Hildebrand